

# Kingdoms

and the

ONE TO WHICH WE OWE

our

ULTIMATE ALLEGIANCE

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# Kingdoms

Jesus said, *"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."*  
(Matthew 6:33 KJV)

**T**HE WORLD is filled with kingdoms. Authority is inescapable. From the moment we take our first breath, we are subjects under rule and jurisdiction. But take heart. God reigns supreme over each and every one of them.

Did you know that there are 117 mentions of the word "Kingdom" in the gospels, yet a scant 7 mentions of the word "salvation" in the gospels? In fact, careful study reveals that Jesus came to preach, not a gospel of salvation, but rather the gospel of the Kingdom.

Prior to Jesus' entry into public ministry, His cousin John the Baptist, the one spoken of in Isaiah 40 sent to prepare the way for the Lord, prefaced his introduction of Christ with these words: *"The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"* (Mark 1:15 NIV). Jesus arrived shortly thereafter.

Jesus Himself, chastising the Pharisees for falsely associating His ministry with the work of the devil, said this: *"... if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you."* (Matthew 12:28 NIV)

Jesus' disciples, like all Jews of their day, suffered under the unjust governing authority of Rome. Not yet understanding the essence of Christ's ministry, they looked for an earthly resolution to their dilemma, hoping

that Jesus might somehow lead a revolution, and remove Rome's grip on their land. But Jesus redirected their thinking. He explained that *"The Kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the Kingdom of God is within you."* (Luke 17: 20b-21 NIV)

Recently, a friend of mine thoughtfully characterized the kingdom of God as having properties similar to DNA. What he meant I believe, is that by God's grace, the Kingdom of God gets inside of us and slowly changes us to look more and more like Jesus.

How can we tell if the kingdom of God is within us? Because we find ourselves wanting to do the will of God. Teaching us to pray, Jesus uttered these words: *"your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*

(Matthew 6:10 NIV)

Jesus' mother, Mary, when first visited by the angel announcing that she was pregnant with the Son of God, responded, *"Let it be to me according to your word."* (Luke 1:38b NKJV) Mary's response demonstrates a spirit truly humble and submissive to God's authority. At that moment, she embraced the Kingdom of God.

Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night He was arrested, prayed this prayer: *"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."* (Matthew 26:39b NIV) Preparing His heart for His destiny on the cross, Jesus too, embraced the Kingdom of God.

May we do so as well.